

So what's this all about?

(continued from page 1)

relationship between people and the food they eat, the land on which it is grown and those who grow it."

Now that you have an idea what CSA is, let me explain our program.

We are asking you to subscribe by purchasing a basket of produce from us once a week. We ask that you pay for a specified number of weeks prior to the delivery of your first basket (this helps your school by keeping the accounting simple and guarantees that we have a home for the crops that we will be growing).

The cost is \$25 per week with \$5 of that money going directly to your school. Your school will provide volunteers to solicit collect the money and distribute the produce. We will deliver the produce to your school on a predetermined day of the week for you to pick up.

Contents of your basket will contain home grown produce from my farm in Irvine. We will supplement with organic produce from other farms (mostly tree fruits) to give a good variety to the menu.

Through this newsletter, we will try to give a description of all items in your basket, but there will be times when the contents do not match what is listed. Also, your neighbor's basket may not be the same as yours.

Our goal is to help your children develop some good eating habits early in life, help your child's school through this fundraiser and to develop a closer bond between you and your food source.

What's in my basket this week?

(continued from page 2)

We are sorry to say that you do not have a choice as to what you will receive from week to week. We will try to provide a nice mix of produce depending upon the season.

The amount of produce that you will receive is about the same as that if you went to the grocery store and bought produce from the shelf. The difference is that you will be receiving produce that is often harvested the morning that you pick up your basket. You should be able to taste the difference in the freshness of the product.

With each basket you will receive this newsletter that will give you an update on what is happening on the farm and a description of items that you will find in your basket. There will be times when items in your basket do not match what is listed or you may not get exactly what your neighbor's basket has. This is due to last minute changes that will occur. We may have more of one product and not enough of another. Hopefully it will all work out in the end.

As the seasons change, so will the contents of your basket. We are in the middle of winter crops, like lettuce, broccoli and cauliflower.

We will be planting our spring/summer crops soon, squash, beans, cucumbers.

My favorite crop is just starting and you all get to enjoy it with me.....STRAWBERRIES!

ENJOY!!!!!!

Fresh From Tanaka Farms LLC

53803/4 University Drive
Irvine, California 92612

Office (949) 653-2100

e-mail - TanakaFarmsCSA@AOL.com

Starting Newsletter

So what's this all about?



The Tanaka Family (my son Ken, wife Shirley and myself, Glenn) would like to thank you for being a part of this new and exciting partnership between your family, your child's school and your local family farm.

This program is based upon the CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) concept. The following is an excerpt from an article by the Community Supported Agriculture of North America at University of Massachusetts Extension.

"CSA reflects an innovative and resourceful strategy to connect local farmers with local consumers; develop a regional food supply and strong local economy; maintain a sense of community; encourage land stewardship; and honor the knowledge and experience of growers and producers working with small to medium farms. CSA is a unique model of local agriculture

whose roots reach back 30 years to Japan where a group of women concerned about the increase in food imports and the corresponding decrease in the farming population initiated a direct growing and purchasing relationship between their group and local farms. This arrangement, called "teikei" in Japanese, translates to "putting the farmers' face on food." This concept traveled to Europe and was adapted to the U.S. and given the name "Community Supported Agriculture" at Indian Line Farm, Massachusetts, in 1985. As of January 2005, there are over 1500 CSA farms across the US and Canada.

CSA is a partnership of mutual commitment between a farm and a community of supporters which provides a direct link between the production and consumption of food. Supporters cover a farm's yearly operating budget by purchasing a share of the season's harvest. CSA members make a commitment to support the farm throughout the season, and assume the costs, risks and bounty of growing food along with the farmer or grower. Members help pay for seeds, fertilizer, water, equipment maintenance, labor, etc. In return, the farm provides, to the best of its ability, a healthy supply of seasonal fresh produce throughout the growing season. Becoming a member creates a responsible (continued on page 4)

What's in my basket this week?



The northern part of Tanaka Farms where most of the vegetables are being grown.

Most of the fruits and vegetables that will be in your box from week to week have been grown on my 30 acre farm right here in Irvine. Looking at the above photograph, you wouldn't think that this farm is about a half mile from the 405 freeway, but we are.

We will try to include many everyday items like tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, radishes, etc. But we will also from time to time include some new or specialty items. For example, this last fall we had some "Poha Berries." It is something that I have never grown before and I wanted to give it try. They are little berries that have a pineapple taste to them. I also included some "Edamame." These are soybeans that make a great way for the kids to help out with to prepare and they might enjoy more when they eat them because they were able to help with the preparation.

There will be items in your basket that we have not grown on the farm. They will generally be tree fruits like apples, oranges and stone fruits. I add these items to give your basket a little more variety. Most of these items grow on trees and require three to five years before they begin to bear fruit. Since we do not own the property that we farm and we are on a year to year lease, we are not able to plant these type of fruits for your enjoyment. The fruits will be from organic farms and we will tell you what is not from our farm. (Continued on page 4)

Please Note: Contents of your basket may differ from what is listed below



Radishes – I like to eat these raw and enjoy the way that they crunch when you bite into them. I put them in everything, sliced or diced, they provide a little zing in salads, sandwiches and as condiments alone.



Lettuce – Tear them up into a salad, use them in your sandwiches or use them like tortillas to wrap other vegetables or meat.



Carrots – if you have been on any of our Farm Tours, you will know that carrots are usually a favorite with the kids. Wash and leave in a baggie for the kids to munch on any time of the day.



Red Beets - You can eat the tops like spinach, I don't really care for them. But I do like the bottoms. Boil them until fork tender, peel and put in the refrigerator. Eat cold with some mayo. Make sure to warn your children that when they go to the restroom, their urine and stool will be red from the beets!



Broccoli – I don't really care for this particular vegetable raw, but steamed broccoli and a little mayo is one of my favorites!

No picture available

Organic Apples and Bananas – We have supplemented your baskets with some delicious fuji apples and bananas. If the bananas are green, leave them out on the counter and let them ripen.



Strawberry Jam - This jam is made from a friend of mine in Juliann, California. Last June, I took her some of our organically grown strawberries and she added a little sugar, not too much



Cauliflower – Great raw, break up the head and wash, some ranch dressing and you are ready! Start asking around and find that recipe for mashed cauliflower! Supposed to look and taste just like mashed potatoes!!!! Someone try it out and let us know.



Cilantro – Doesn't matter what you do with this, it just smells wonderful. Salads, sandwich spreads, soups, or just let it sit in the kitchen.



STRAWBERRIES - Sorry we will not have any strawberries for another couple weeks. There was too much rain and caused rain damage. Sorry.